

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 PARIS 07652 161054Z

ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0629

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

S E C R E T PARIS 07652

EXDIS

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: TECH, FR, PK

SUBJECT: FRENCH-PAKISTANI CONTRACT ON REPROCESSING

PLANT

REF: (A) STATE 051333;(B) PARIS 06918; (C) PARIS 03588

1. PARA 6, REFTEL A, REQUESTED THAT WE RAISE WITH MFA'S NAZELLE THE SUBJECT OF NEXT STEPS WITH REGARD TO THE PAKISTAN REPROCESSING PLANT CONTRACT. IN DISCUSSIONS ON MARCH 15 WITH EMBASSY SCICOUN, NAZELLE WAS OF THE VIEW THAT THE BEST APPROACH AT THIS POINT WAS FOR DIRECT US CONVERSATIONS WITH BHUTTO. IN NAZELLE'S VIEW, DISCUSSIONS IN FEBRUARY IN WASHINGTON INDICATED US/FRENCH AGREEMENT THAT SUCH CONVERSATIONS SHOULD BE HELD AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AFTER THE PAKISTAN ELECTIONS. THUS, HE FELT IT BEST TO HOLD SUCH DISCUSSIONS IN THE VERY NEAR FUTURE.

2. NAZELLE'S VIEW IS THAT IT WOULD BE MORE PRACTICAL FOR THE US, IN DISCUSSIONS WITH BHUTTO, TO ARGUE FOR A PAKISTANI POLITICAL DECISION NOT TO CONTINUE WITH THE REPROCESSING PLANT RATHER THAN TO PRESENT TO THE PAKISTANIS A SITUATION WHICH WOULD TRY TO HAVE

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THEM ACCEPT THE THESIS THAT THEY COULD NOT TECHNICALLY COMPLETE THE CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATION OF THE PLANT. SUFFICIENT TECHNOLOGY MAY HAVE ALREADY PASSED INTO PAKISTANI HANDS WHICH, TOGETHER WITH EXISTING PAKISTANI NUCLEAR ENGINEERING TALENT, TIME AND MONEY, WOULD PERMIT THE COMPLETION AND OPERATION OF THE PLANT. THUS, THE ONLY DECISION FOR PAKISTAN TO MAKE TO MEET

LONG-TERM US OBJECTIVES IS THE POLITICAL DECISION NOT TO CONTINUE WITH AN OPERATIVE REPROCESSING FACILITY.

3. THE LAST SENTENCE OF PARA 6, REFTEL A, NOTES THAT WASHINGTON ASSUMES THAT THE GOF WILL TAKE NO FURTHER ACTION TO IMPLEMENT THE REPROCESSING PLANT CONTRACT. REFTEL C OUTLINED THE CURRENT STATUS OF THE CONTRACT AND INDICATED THAT CONTRACTS FOR SEVERAL MAJOR ITEMS OF EQUIPMENT WERE SOON DUE TO BE SIGNED. NAZELLE STATED THAT THE CONTRACT ON THE FUEL ROD CUTTING MACHINE WAS READY FOR SIGNATURE BUT THAT THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT HAD NOT COMPLETED APPROVAL OF ALL ASPECTS OF THE FINANCIAL CREDIT TO BE EXTENDED ON THAT CONTRACT. HE INDICATED THAT THE GOF COULD PROBABLY EXTEND ITS DELAY UNTIL THE END OF MARCH BUT HE DID NOT FEEL IT COULD EXTEND BEYOND THAT TIME. HE REPORTED THAT SOME CONTRACTS HAD PROCEEDED WHICH INVOLVED MINOR PIECES OF SPECIAL EQUIPMENT AND DID NOT INVOLVE GOF FUNDING OR CREDIT DECISIONS.

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